Status of Implementation of Recommendations contained in the Seventh Report of the Department-related Standing Committee on Social Justice and Empowerment

THE MINISTER OF SOCIAL JUSTICE AND EMPOWERMENT (SHRIMATI MEIRA KUMAR): Sir, I lay the statement on the Table of the House.

Status of Implementation of Recommendations contained in the Hundred and Forty-second Report of the Department-related Standing Committee on Science and Technology, Environment and Forests

THE MINISTER OF SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY (SHRI KAPIL SIBAL): Sir, I lay the statement on the Table of the House.

Status of Implementation of Recommendations contained in the Eleventh, Twelfth, Thirteenth and Fourteenth Reports of the Department- Related Standing Committee on Railways

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI R. VELU): Sir, I lay the statement on the Table of the House.

HALF-AN-HOUR DISCUSSION

Points arising out of the answer given in the Rajya Sabha on 3rd March, 2006, to Starred Question No. 191 regarding'Extension of Rail Line from Dimapur/Dhansiri to Imphal' (*Contd.*)

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI R. VELU): Mr. Deputy Chairman, Sir, I will be brief. The work of construction of this Diphu to Karong was included in the Budget of 1997-98 at a cost of Rs. 1,600 crores as the first phase of the link to Imphal. The requisite approval of the project was also received in 1998. But, then, there was an objection from Karbi-Anglong Autonomous District Council, which expressed reservations saying, "We will not allow this project because it is the violation of the Constitution because this Autonomous Council should have been consulted before taking up the

project." This is point number one. Number two, they also stated, "You come with a kind of approach paper and also have consultations with the Autonomous Council." These are the things they have put as conditions. That is why it has taken a long time.

By then, the successive Chief Ministers of Manipur wrote letters to the Railway Minister saying that this was being delayed. In 2000, the Chief Minister insisted to have the connectivity from Jiribam to Imphal of Manipur which is about Kms. involving Rs. 727 crores as an expenditure against what we mentioned, Rs. 1,600 crores. They said that this as cost effective and the earlier proposal involved the three States of Assam, Nagaland and Manipur and the question of getting clearances—environmental clearance, forest clearance and other clearances—will definitely take a longer time, but it was easy with one State, namely, Manipur in the new proposal. So, they approached the Central Government and the Central Government in lieu of the earlier proposal, in the CCEA meeting which was held on 2.12.2003, approved the proposal and the work was included in the supplementary Budget of 2003-04.

Sir, we are not here to discriminate against any State. In fact, as the hon. Member was saying, with regard to all the seven sister States, we have been trying to do something on connecting those State capitals. In fact, I would like to mention here that with regard to Arunachal Pradesh, the work of new line from Harmuti to Itanagar is in progress. The same is about Tripura also in which the Kumarghat-Agartala line is sanctioned and the work is in progress. The target of completion is 2006-07. In the same way, about Manipur. The work of the new line from Jiribam to Imphal, which the hon. Member has mentioned, is to be completed in 2010. In the same way about Nagaland, the new line from Dimapur to Kohima. I would again like to mention that we are not against any State. In fact, the project has gone to the Planning Commission. It is being appraised so that we will have this Dimapur to Kohima, about 88 Kms. long line which will be involving Rs. 911 crores; So, Nagaland will not be deprived of the railway line. Once this is appraised by the Planning Commission. Once it comes with reference to the Planning Commission's appraisal, we will take further action. In fact, as the hon. Member has already mentioned in Nagaland at Dimapur and Tuni railway lines are available. Now, he was mentioning that many proposals have

been submitted to the Railways. We look into them as to which are feasible in terms of our parameters and take further action. I think with these words, I must say that the project Jiribam-Imphal which he was mentioning, was only in lieu of Diphu-Karang project, and it has been taken up. It is more economical in terms of cost as well as the years of completion, clearance etc.

SHRI T. R. ZELIANG: The distance between Jiribam to Imphal is 223 kms. And again Jiribam to Diphu is another 300 kms. So, the entire length of road is more than 500 kms. whereas Diphu to Karong, Imphal is within 200 kms. So, will people prefer to travel *via* Jiribam-Silchar to Diphu-Guwahati, the main line of the country or will people prefer to go through this Nagaland-Karong-Imphal which is 200 kms.? There is a difference of 300 kms. I am talking about that, Sir. That is why I am asking whether you are going to restore all the projects which have taken 20 years to get approval. Now after approval you are talking about Kohima. How long will it take to get approval? You are going to scrap it. This is a very tricky one. ...(*Interruptions*)... We can never get it. The Government should reconsider to restore all projects which were already approved ...(*Interruptions*)...

MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: Mr. Minister, would you like to respond?

SHRI R. VELU: This has got a different angle about roads and other things. This will be examined and further action will be taken if it is feasible. ...(*Interruptions*)...

MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: He has told that he will examine it. Next question.

Points arising out of the answer given in the Rajya Sabha on 17th February, 2006 to Unstarred Question No. 38 regarding "Pollution in Ganga"

श्री उपसभापतिः श्री कमाल अख्तर। आज जरा प्रिसाइस बोलिएगा।

श्री कमाल अख्तर (उत्तर प्रदेश): उपसभापति जी, सबसे पहले तो मैं आपका शुक्रिया अदा करना चाहता हूं। मैं जानता हूं कि सभी लोगों को जल्दी जाना है, लेकिन आज जो सवाल